

**Isaiah 44:6–8**

<sup>6</sup>Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel  
and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:  
“I am the first and I am the last;  
besides me there is no god.  
<sup>7</sup>Who is like me? Let him proclaim it.  
Let him declare and set it before me,  
since I appointed an ancient people.  
Let them declare what is to come, and  
what will happen.  
<sup>8</sup>Fear not, nor be afraid;  
have I not told you from of old and  
declared it?  
And you are my witnesses!  
Is there a God besides me?  
There is no Rock; I know not any.”

**Romans 8:18–27**

<sup>18</sup>For I consider that the sufferings of  
this present time are not worth comparing  
with the glory that is to be revealed to us.  
<sup>19</sup>For the creation waits with eager longing  
for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup>For  
the creation was subjected to futility, not  
willingly, but because of him who  
subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation  
itself will be set free from its bondage to  
decay and obtain the freedom of the glory  
of the children of God. <sup>22</sup>For we know that  
the whole creation has been groaning  
together in the pains of childbirth until  
now. <sup>23</sup>And not only the creation, but we  
ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the  
Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly  
for adoption as sons, the redemption of our  
bodies. <sup>24</sup>For in this hope we were saved.  
Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who  
hopes for what he sees? <sup>25</sup>But if we hope  
for what we do not see, we wait for it with  
patience.

<sup>26</sup>Likewise the Spirit helps us in our  
weakness. For we do not know what to  
pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself  
intercedes for us with groanings too deep  
for words. <sup>27</sup>And he who searches hearts  
knows what is the mind of the Spirit,  
because the Spirit intercedes for the saints  
according to the will of God.

### **Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43**

<sup>24</sup>[Jesus] put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, <sup>25</sup>but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away.

<sup>26</sup>So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. <sup>27</sup>And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?’ <sup>28</sup>He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ So the servants said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ <sup>29</sup>But he said, ‘No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. <sup>30</sup>Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’” . . .

<sup>36</sup>Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” <sup>37</sup>He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup>The field is the world, and the good seed is the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, <sup>39</sup>and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. <sup>40</sup>Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age.

<sup>41</sup>The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, <sup>42</sup>and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup>Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.”